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AFGHANS CRITICAL OF THE PROPOSAL. WHILE ATTEMPTING TO DISCREDIT THE INITIATIVE, HOWEVER, THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN CAREFUL NOT TO SHOW THEMSELVES AS EXPLICITLY REJECTING IT. END SUMMARY.

3. THE SOVIET MEDIA HAVE QUOTED REJECTIONS OF ANY FORM OF NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF THE BABRAK REGIME FROM AFGHAN PRIME MINISTER KESHIMAND, FOREIGN MINISTER DOST AND THE KABUL NEW TIMES. THE LATTER TWO CONDEMNED THE EC PROPOSAL BY NAME. DOST, IN AN INTERVIEW WITH TASS THAT WAS PUBLISHED IN THE JUL 16 PRAVDA, CALLED THE EC INITIATIVE ANOTHER ATTEMPT BY THE "IMPERIALIST COUNTRIES TO UNDERMINE THE AFGHAN REVOLUTION," BOTH AFGHAN OFFICIALS STATE THAT THE ONLY BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS IS THE BABRAK REGIME'S MAY 14, 1980 PROPOSAL FOR NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH ITS TWO NEIGHBORS, PAKISTAN AND IRAN.

4. PRAVDA, ON JULY 14, PUBLISHED A LONG COMMENTARY BY ITS POLITICAL OBSERVER VITALIY KORIONOV THAT AMOUNTED TO A REITERATION OF THE BASIC SOVIET APPROACH TOWARD AFGHANISTAN. KORIONOV'S ARTICLE, WHICH RECOUNTED MOSCOW'S STANDARD JUSTIFICATION FOR ITS PRESENCE IN AFGHANISTAN, CLEARLY SUGGESTED THE SOVIETS INTEND TO PERSEVERE IN THEIR PRESENT COURSE. WITHOUT MENTIONING THE EC PROPOSAL BY NAME, KORIONOV REJECTED AS "ABSURD" THE "VERY THOUGHT" THAT A SETTLEMENT OF THE AFGHAN QUESTION COULD TAKE PLACE BEHIND THE BACK OF THE DRA. AS USUAL, THE AUTHOR TRIED TO PUT THE ONUS FOR THE CONTINUED FIGHTING IN THE COUNTRY AND FOR THE  
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ABSENCE OF A SETTLEMENT ON THE U.S. AND CHINA.  
MATLOCK

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